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THE HIGHER BRANCH OF SCIENCE,

OR

Materialism Refuted by Facts,

BY
H. J. BROWNE,

Member of the Royal Society of Victoria.

A Paper read at the Hall of Science, Melbourne, on the 15th August, 1884, which was written with the intention of being read at a meeting of the Royal Society of Victoria, but which was declined by the Council of that conservative Association.

"The Astronomer, with patient, searching gaze
Doth with his tube the depths of space explore ;
Shows Neptune's orb, or 'neath the solar blaze,
Reveals a world by man unseen before.
Justly the world rewards his arduous toil,
And claims to share the glory of his fame ;
Beyond the boundaries of his native soil,
From land to land the breezes bear his name.
But he who doth a spirit-world reveal,
Not far in space, but near to every soul,
Which nought but mists of sense and sin conceal,
(Would from man's sight those mists at length might roll !)
He is with incredulity received,
Or with a slow, reluctant faith believed."

1884

W. H. TERRY, 84, RUSSELL STREET,
MELBOURNE.

COPY OF OPEN LETTER TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF VICTORIA.

SIR,—During the twelve years that I have been a member of the Royal Society of Victoria, I have, on several occasions, been asked why I did not offer to read a paper on the branch of science to which I have devoted special attention for many years past. Now that I have done so, my paper has been declined by the Council of the Society. I should not have felt surprised at this had it occurred some years back, seeing that a paper on the same subject by the eminent chemist Mr. William Crookes, was, in a similar manner, declined by the British Royal Society ; but Professor Barrett's paper having since then been accepted by that Association, I did not think that the Victorian would have been more conservative than the parent Society.

I must request that you will be good enough to erase my name from the list of membership of the Royal Society of Victoria. When the Society becomes less illiberal and intolerant towards anything that does not accord with received theories, I may allow my name to be reinstated, and if so, I shall take an opportunity of bringing this episode under the notice of the Society.

I am, sir, yours faithfully,
(Signed) HUGH JUNOR BROWNE,

Park House, Wellington Parade, East Melbourne.
August 20th, 1884.

The following is a Copy of Letter from the Royal Society of Victoria declining to receive my paper on the Higher Branch of Science :—

Royal Society of Victoria,
Melbourne, August 7th, 1884.

Sir,—I have the honour to inform you that the paper which you proposed to read before the Royal Society of Victoria was considered by the Council, at its meeting held this afternoon, when it was resolved that your paper on “The Higher Branch of Science” should be declined. I have therefore returned the MS. to you by post.

I have the honour to be. sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed) W. R. BENTLEY,
Assistant Secretary.

HUGH JUNOR BROWNE, ESQ.,
Park House, Wellington Parade.

THE HIGHER BRANCH OF SCIENCE,
OR
MATERIALISM REFUTED BY FACTS;
BY H. J. BROWNE.

A paper read at the Hall of Science, Melbourne, on the evening of the 15th August, 1884, which was written with the intention of being read at a meeting of the Royal Society of Victoria, but which was declined by the Council of that conservative Association.

“There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy.”—SHAKESPEARE.

My object in addressing you this evening is to bring under your notice a subject that is attracting the attention of some of the greatest minds of the day, although it is still ignored by the majority of men of science owing to its unpopularity and the nonsense, error, and fraud that have been mixed up with it by ignorant and unprincipled people.

I have written in plain language so that there may be no ambiguity about the matter under consideration, and although some of my statements may not be complimentary to scientific conservatives as a class, they are not to be taken as personal by any one present. It is not individuals, but false theories and presumptuous dogmatism that I assail. I am fully aware of my inability to do justice to a subject of such transcendent verities and of such vast import to all, as the one of which I am about to treat; therefore I claim your indulgence for any shortcomings on my part.

Owing to the comprehensiveness of the subject it will be impossible for me to do more in this paper than to very briefly allude in a general way to a few of its leading points; but if I succeed in enlisting your interest in this matter, I shall, if an opportunity is afforded me, be happy to enlarge thereon at a future time.

I may observe, in the first place, that society is made up of three leading classes, viz.: SUPERSTITIONISTS, or those who believe in a spiritual existence merely on the statements of others, without possessing any valid proof thereof. MATERIALISTS, or those who disregarding all

testimony do not believe in a spiritual existence from want of proof, because they have never taken the trouble to investigate the subject. And RATIONALISTS, who know that there is a spiritual existence from facts presented to their senses, having personally tested the statements of others in regard thereto by patient and earnest personal investigation.

Materialists, or as they generally term themselves, Secularists, may be divided into two classes, viz.: Atheists, or positive negationists, who deny that there is anything besides matter; and Agnostics, or those who say that they have no knowledge of anything beyond matter, and that the attributes of matter account for all the phenomena which we witness.

It is said that nine-tenths of the men of science of to-day are Agnostics, which I hold is merely a milder and more respectable name for Atheists or Materialists. They tacitly hold that there is no such thing as soul or spirit; that intelligence is the product of atomic force; that without a brain composed of yellowish matter no intelligence exists; that when the matter and force of which the physical body of man is constituted are dissolved, his individuality is snuffed out like the flame of a candle, because intelligence, they say, is entirely dependent on molecular motion; that all life, feeling, and sense are due to changes in the same matter; that physical matter is the sole basis and origin of thought and intellect; that human actions are but the culminations of laws that work in substances, and that throughout the varied changes in matter, forms are assumed that decay one by one, and as these forms mature, so the human mind appears, in much the same way as a bubble on the water, and disappear in like manner to a spark from a furnace.

These dogmatic Agnostics, in fact, assert that matter contains within itself the elements of motion and force, of something which unfolds and developes; that matter possesses the powers and potencies of all forms of life; that all vegetables and animals have risen spontaneously from inorganic materials; that monera, or almost invisible

jelly specks are the self-acting primal ancestors of all the forms of vegetable and animal life, including man ; that from monera to man there is a hereditary thread running through all forms of life ; and thus they account for all the phenomena which we witness ; completely ignoring the fact that man could have no knowledge of matter or of force except through the senses, which Mesmerism and Clairvoyance have over and over again, under test conditions, demonstrated to be at times not dependent on the physical organism.

Those who have witnessed the wonderful phenomena of Mesmerism, Biology, Hypnotism, and Clairvoyance, know that the greatest powers of mind are manifested when apparently not one of the physical senses are in use. If the Clairvoyant, for instance, can see without the aid of his physical sight, as I and hundreds of others have over and over again had demonstrated, then he must possess an independent organism in order to account for the phenomena, and if in such cases the physical senses are not indispensable, then I maintain that it is only reasonable to assume that when man's animal body is dissolved through the change called death, he will still possess those spiritual faculties of which the physical organs were but the necessary mediums while he was on the earthly plane of existence. And I hold that no one has the right to deny the truth of Mesmerism, Biology, Hypnotism, or Clairvoyance, who has not taken the trouble to test their reality. One might quite as reasonably close his eyes in the daylight and then declare those to be fools who kept theirs open and said it was not dark. People who, without investigation, deny the truth and reality of Mesmerism and Clairvoyance resemble the African chief who laughed at the missionary when the latter told him that in cold countries water at times becomes as hard and solid as a stone.

These conservative scientists are well aware, however, that there are forces and phenomena in nature which physical science knows nothing about, and still they obstinately refuse to investigate them, because they lead to conclusions at variance with many of the generally

received theories of the day ; also because they know that materialistic views, under the name of Agnosticism, are now tolerated by the orthodox, who inconsistently look with indignation on those who evince the slightest sympathy with spiritual science.

These agnostic scientists, who presume to limit the capabilities of man's nature, are also aware that if once they open their eyes to the truth and admit the occurrence of spiritual phenomena they will have to follow in the wake of those true scientists who have courageously taken the lead in these subjects, and to give up many false theories now held by them as scientific truths.

Theologians, on the other hand, as a rule, admit the occurrence of spiritual phenomena, but they, as presumptuously as the pseudo-scientists to whom I have been referring, declare that the spiritual manifestations recorded as having occurred in olden times were the works of God, and that those which are witnessed in the present day are the works of another personage. So we have the sorry spectacle of one class of educated men pronouncing spiritual phenomena as all a delusion, and the other that they are a reality. 'Tis said, "When Drs. differ who's to decide?" To which I reply : rational and sensible men who, notwithstanding its unpopularity, have carefully and perseveringly investigated the subject, and who consequently are far more competent to judge than are either those who, without examination, deny the occurrence of spiritual manifestations, or those who believe in them without even a particle of proof, resting merely on the opinions of others. Than this the height of folly could no further go.

Any one who will take the trouble to investigate the subject can satisfy himself as to the reality of the spiritual phenomena, so that their occurrence is not a question of argument, but a verifiable fact. This being the case, it is evident that those scientists who persistently refuse to investigate, do not desire the truth, but prefer their own foregone conclusions thereto. Well might the eminent chemist, William Crookes, write, "I confess I am surprised and pained at the timidity or apathy

shown by scientific men in reference to this subject."

These scientific Materialists who uphold the dark doctrine of mortal nothingness think that everything is wrong that comes not within their own comprehension and relish, and have even the presumption to scoff at those who, after years of patient study and investigation, have braved public scorn and ridicule, and have boldly nailed their colours to the standard of unpopular truth. Simply because these self-opinionated scientists have never witnessed any striking spiritual manifestation themselves, from their not having gone out of their way to investigate the subject, they have the audacity to assume that they have bounded all nature's laws, and they superciliously treat with contempt men equally eminent with themselves in other branches of science, such as Crookes, Wallace, Varley, Zollner, and others, because, after careful investigation, the latter have declared in favour of spiritual science, or Modern Spiritualism as it is commonly termed, which commences where the physical sciences leave off. Yet these spiritual ignoramuses have the presumption at times to express their opinions and to dogmatise on this subject, of which, with all their learning, they know as little as does a naked savage of Euclid, or a frog of differential calculus.

I maintain that it is the height of folly for either Materialists or Theologians, who have not investigated spiritual science, to scoff at those who have, or to put their opinions against the experience of investigators of the subject; in other words, to put mere hypothesis against ascertained facts. These facts, doubtless, may appear incredible to them, as they did to every investigator before their demonstration; but until opponents to Modern Spiritualism have devoted an equal amount of time to the investigation of the subject as have those who attest these facts, their opposition is not only presumptuous but illogical. Bear in mind it is the authority of facts, and not the authority of mere opinions, which constitute sound theories. Sir Humphrey Davy declared that "Facts are more useful when they contradict, than when they support received theories." And Sir John

Herschell wrote: "The perfect observer of any department of science will have his eyes, as it were, opened that they may be struck at once by any occurrence which according to received theories ought not to happen, for these are the facts which serve as clues to new discoveries." Humboldt maintained that "a presumptuous skepticism that rejects facts without investigation of their truth is, in some respects, more injurious than unquestioning credulity." Paley, in his "Evidences," writes: "Contempt prior to examination is an intellectual vice, from which those of the greatest faculties of mind are not free. I know not indeed, whether the men of the greatest faculties are not the most subject to it." J. B. Angell recommends all to "heed well the emphatic lesson of the nineteenth century, which is to thoroughly investigate a subject, however strange, before condemning it." La Place states: "We are so far from knowing all the agents of nature, and their various modes of action, that it would not be philosophical to deny any phenomenon merely because in our actual state of knowledge they are inexplicable." Thackery, in reply to a party of scientists, remarked: "It is all very well for you who have never probably witnessed spiritual manifestations to talk as you do; but had you seen what I have witnessed you would hold a different opinion." Professor A. Mahon, writes: "We shall admit the facts claimed by Spiritualists. We admit the facts for the all-adequate reason that after careful inquiry, we have been led to the conclusion that they are real. We think that no candid inquirer who carefully investigates can come to any other conclusion." Cromwell Varley, F.R.S., declares: "I know of no instance, either in the new or old world, in which any clear-headed man who has carefully examined the phenomena has failed to become a convert to the spiritual hypothesis." Dr. Rogers writes: "The whole body of the phenomena of Spiritualism offers to the philosopher a new view of man and his relation to the sphere in which he lives, by neglecting which the deepest mysteries of the human being are left unsolved." Dr. Robert Chambers, the author of the "Vestiges of Creation," states: "Spiritual-

alism is the germ of the greatest discovery and the greatest revolution of human thought that any age of the world has witnessed. . . . Instead of being a superstition itself, as some are disposed to think it, they will find it the explanation and the extinguisher of all superstition." And Professor Butleroff, of St. Petersburg University, declares : that "the recognition of the reality of spiritual manifestations will very soon be the inevitable duty of every honourable observer, and finally of all humanity. This recognition will destroy many of the present prevailing views ; life and science will have to come to terms with it. Our old notions about the essential nature of matter dissolve in the light of the actuality of these facts, and new ideas present themselves of the endless varieties of degrees and forms of existence." Victor Hugo observes : "We see the eyes which death closes ; we do not see those which it opens." Professor Tait, of Glasgow University, says : that "the great advance in the future in natural theology is to be found in the corridor now opened up between science and religion, not through the material world, but through the immaterial. The reconciliation of conflicting schemes of religious and scientific truth will be found by investigating the unseen universe. That avenue has been walled up ; there has been placed over it, in the name of both science and religion, 'No thoroughfare this way.' In the twentieth century that wall will be thrown down from turret to foundation-stone, and scientific and religious thought will be reconciled by an appeal to the realities of the unseen world." Another writer states : "Spiritualism shatters with its tiny 'rap' the marble image which Materialism has set up for humanity." Professor Mapes declares : that "if after making every allowance for the incongruities, false theories, fanaticism and the common errors attached to Spiritualism, only ten per cent. of the whole prove true and impregnable, it is still as sound a science as chemistry was at the beginning of this century, which has thrown aside ninety per cent. of the teachings then received as truths." And M. Guizot observes : "The Spiritualists of our day have

given to their researches and to their ideas a character really scientific. They have introduced into the study of man, and of the intellectual world, the method practised with so much success in the study of man and of the material world; that is to say, they have taken the observation of facts as the point of departure and the constant guide of their investigations."

I may here observe that not only all theories, but also all facts, which have not accorded with popular opinion and received theories have been ignored, if not opposed by the dominant intellectual party in all countries and in every age. Anything that has not harmonised with their preconceptions and prejudices has been denounced as impossible, false, unscientific, and opposed to natural law; and scientists have in this respect been almost as intolerant and dogmatic as theologians. The man, however, is only a pseudo-scientist who is afraid of any newly discovered truth at variance with received theories, who persistently ignores or denies well-attested and repeatedly verified facts merely because they are inexplicable by the generally known laws of nature, and who, from a contemptible pride of intellect, obstinately refuses to investigate that which he fears will overthrow or modify long-cherished theories of science.

It is a curious fact disclosed by history that in all ages among those of the highest intellectual culture there has always been the most prejudice, the greatest bias of thought, and the larger number of conventional obstacles against the acceptance of any newly discovered truth not in accord with popular opinion; and the same may be said to-day of Spiritualism, which completely upsets some of the darling preconceptions of those false scientists who cherish intellect without soul and reason without spirituality.

Facts of a rare or extraordinary character have, as I have observed, invariably encountered obstinate denial at the hands of both theologians and scientists. The attitude of the world has, in fact, ever been against newly discovered truths; which have, at first, the lot of struggling against old beliefs and cherished theories; and

those truths demonstrated through spiritual science cannot certainly be said, with truth, to be exceptions to this general rule. The fact that spiritual phenomena have been accepted after the fullest investigation by many of those who represent every phase of modern thought and advancement, notwithstanding that they entered upon the investigation of Spiritualism for the express purpose of exposing it, believing it to be a gross delusion, should in itself be sufficient to justify Materialists in investigating it before they presume to denounce it as all fraud and humbug.

Mr. Alfred Russell Wallace, the eminent naturalist, who shares with Darwin the credit for having submitted to popular consideration the evolution theory, writing of the opposition and prejudice with which discoveries at variance with popular opinion have at first been received, remarks: "It is not necessary to do more than refer to the world-known names of Galileo, Harvey, and Jenner. The great discoveries they made were, as we know, violently opposed by all their scientific contemporaries, to whom they appeared absurd and incredible; but we have equally striking examples nearer our own day. When Benjamin Franklin brought the subject of lightning-conductors before the Royal Society he was laughed at as a dreamer, and his paper was not admitted to the philosophical transactions.

When Young put forth his wonderful proofs of the undulatory theory of light, he was hooted at as absurd by the popular scientific writers of the day. The *Edinburgh Review* called upon the public to put Thomas Gray into a straight-jacket for maintaining the practicability of railroads. Sir Humphry Davy laughed at the idea of London being ever lighted with gas. When Stephenson proposed to use locomotives on the Liverpool and Manchester railway, learned men gave evidence that it was impossible they could even go twelve miles an hour. Another great scientific authority declared it to be equally impossible for ocean steamers ever to cross the Atlantic. The French Academy of Science ridiculed the great astronomer Arago when he wanted even to dis-

cuss the subject of the electric telegraph. Medical men ridiculed the stethoscope when it was first discovered." The celebrated French scientist, Lavoisier, I may add, laughed at the idea of aerolites or meteoric stones, and settled the question, satisfactorily to himself, by declaring that as "there are no stones in the sky, none consequently fall to the earth."

I may here observe that there is in the Melbourne University Museum part of a meteoric stone which weighs over half a ton. Such a lesson as this should not be lost on our materialistic friends, who should in future show more circumspection in their systematic denial of that with which they are evidently totally unacquainted, for it demonstrates the folly of people ridiculing or denying extraordinary facts merely because they have not occurred under their own eyes, or because the explanation given of them does not coincide with their opinions.

When we see so much false prejudice against any discoveries which upset received theories on the part of men claiming to be scientists, can we wonder at theologians as a rule being so opposed to the facts brought to light by Modern Spiritualism, through which the errors and delusions which they uphold will in time be supplanted by the light of truth and reality? It was, I may also observe, seventy years after Harvey made known his great discovery of the circulation of the blood before the French Academy of Medicine acknowledged its truth, and, owing to the false prejudice and intolerance that exist, it will probably be many years yet before the truths brought to light by spiritual science will be generally accepted. It is, however, only a matter of time, for facts are stubborn things, and error is transient, while truth is eternal.

In regard to the momentous question, "If a man die shall he live again?" If physical science be consulted she stands with drooping wings looking down into the dark grave, and answers: "The knowledge is not with me; I am educated only in the past; I trace man from the primordial fires, through the granite rock, on through the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms to the

grave ; I can see no farther." Spiritual science alone can solve this problem, yet Agnostics and the generality of Theologians foolishly refuse to investigate it.

As, however, the doctrines so long and obstinately held by the Church as to the earth being flat, and its constituting the centre of the universe, had to succumb to geographical and astronomical demonstration to the contrary, so the equally false materialistic theory that matter is all, will have to give way in time to natural facts, truth, and reason, for, as has been wisely remarked : " Opinions must bow to facts, not facts to opinions."

Prejudice and bigotry unfortunately are still, as they have been in the past, the two great barriers to scientific and religious progress. As the poet truly writes :

" Nothing makes men more drunk than prejudice ;
It shuts their ears and seals up both their eyes ;
Reason it drags in fetters from its throne ;
Truth it expels, and error reigns alone."

While many of those who have never investigated spiritual science inconsistently assert that immortality is only a dream and matter the only reality, those who have done so maintain that continuity of life beyond the change called death is capable of proof by all who will investigate the matter with patience and earnestness ; that the physical body of man is evanescent ; also that psychology is a rational and demonstrative science constructed not of abstractions, but of realities accessible to the inquiries of all men. I may add that in these statements I am supported by the results of a lengthened and world-wide experience.

Objectors to the reality of spiritual phenomena can only urge that they do not believe they occur merely because they have never witnessed them. In thus arguing they resemble the man whom three witnesses swore they saw pick a lady's pocket, who, when asked by the judge if he had anything to say why sentence should not be passed on him, replied that he could produce twenty witnesses who could swear they did not see him do it. Any fool can deny that the transit of Venus took place, but it would take a clever man indeed to give valid

reasons for such denial. It is the same in the case of the spiritual phenomena, which even some who have witnessed them may for interested purposes deny, but this does not affect their reality with honest investigators who have over and over again witnessed them under test conditions, though it doubtless will be otherwise with the ignorant and biassed who are only too glad to have their prejudices confirmed, even at the expense of their intelligence and their honesty. Those who admit the phenomena, but question their spiritual origin, should be prepared to suggest a more rational hypothesis to account for their occurrence before they contradict others of greater experience in the matter than themselves.

The innumerable hypotheses which from time to time have been suggested to account for the phenomena, make a far greater demand on our imagination than does the simple spiritual explanation, than which no other has been found to cover all the phenomena. In fact the utter absurdity and glaring improbability of most of the hypotheses which opponents to Modern Spiritualism have at various times put forth to account for the phenomena evince the strong animus that popularly exists against the subject, and shows to what lengths unscrupulous men will go to disprove attested facts which give the lie to their pet but erroneous theories. These self-condemnatory hypotheses are, however, received with eagerness by the public press and by those who, from ignorance of spiritual realities or from selfish purposes, are opposed thereto ; but to those who have investigated the subject these absurd suggestions are viewed in their proper light, *i. e.*, as flagrant insults to reason and common sense, which only the prejudiced would tolerate for an instant. I refer to muscle-feeling, thought-reading, unconscious cerebration, latent thought, reflex action of the brain, etc., etc.

The popular idea that magnetism or electricity causes the various spiritual manifestations is, to all who have witnessed them, too absurd to merit a moment's consideration, and will continue so until it can be demon-

strated that magnetism and electricity can generate rationality, personate a thinking being, and play the part of a sentient, moral agent. One might as reasonably assert that electricity indites all the messages received through the telegraph-wires, as to argue that magnetism or electricity is the cause of spiritual phenomena.

I freely grant that there have been an immense amount of nonsense, gross misrepresentation, and numerous cases of fraud and imposture connected with the modern spiritual movement; but it must be admitted that where there is much smoke there must be some fire, and that a forged bank-note only proves that there must have been a genuine one to copy from.

Is it reasonable, let me ask, to refuse to investigate this subject merely because a number of unprincipled people have, for selfish purposes, turned impostors under the cloak of being spiritual mediums or exposers thereof, and have thereby deceived some who were investigating the subject? Should we not rather, as rational beings, act in this matter as we do in all others, viz., select the true and reject the false, proving all things and holding fast to that which is good?

That there are contemptible and irrational Spiritualists, as there are in every class of students of the physical sciences, I admit; but as this does not affect the matter under consideration I shall not enlarge thereon, as I could do to some purpose. I also admit that some of the phenomena ascribed by the ignorant to disembodied spirits have no connection therewith, and that the powers of the human mind, under abnormal conditions, are but imperfectly known as yet; still, with all this we possess ample evidence that disembodied spirits are the chief factors in the production of most of the spiritual phenomena which non-investigators so foolishly ridicule. I must not, however, be too severe upon them, as I did the same myself before the reality of the phenomena was demonstrated to me, much indeed to my surprise, for I used to think that to be a Spiritualist one required a good stock of credulity, which I am not generally credited with, having cast it overboard

some twenty years ago, when I exchanged blind faith for reason, and fiction for facts. I am fully aware from experience, however, that my facts will be disputed, my ability to use my senses denied, and my intellectual integrity attacked by the opponents of Spiritualism; but I am in good company, and am too old a soldier on the battlefield of truth to be silenced by such tactics. I speak that which I know, and testify of that which I have seen and heard, "impugn it whoso list." Caviel, ridicule, or denunciation, cannot affect demonstrable facts.

Owing to the unpopularity of Spiritualism and the prevailing ignorance on the subject, the newspapers frequently publish the frauds and impositions practised by the unprincipled people I have referred to, and endeavour to cast ridicule on the whole affair; while the genuine manifestations witnessed are seldom, if ever, reported in the public press; popular misrepresentation of, and repugnance to, Spiritualism is but the natural outcome of this one-sided conduct on the part of the press. Another very prevalent misconception is that investigators of spiritual science are a superstitious lot of people. Surely the relying on the evidences of one's senses and on the observation of facts does not constitute superstition? I maintain that notwithstanding the unpopularity of the subject, there are, comparatively speaking, as many distinguished scientific and literary men in favour of Modern Spiritualism as there are against it, nine-tenths of whom have entered upon its investigation, as I have said, for the express purpose of exposing it, believing it to be a gross delusion, but who are now some of its most ardent advocates.

In former times, all spiritual or occult phenomena were looked upon as supernatural or miraculous occurrences; they are and have always been the result of natural law; for every spiritual manifestation that has ever taken place has occurred in strict accordance with fixed and inexorable laws, and as every effect must have its preceding and adequate cause, I hold that a miracle, either in ancient or modern days, is a delusion; the words miraculous and supernatural being merely terms used by

man to vindicate his own ignorance. It appears, however, that nothing short of a miracle will satisfy the majority of Materialists, for they require that spiritual phenomena shall be shown them to order without the necessary conditions being complied with. Is it reasonable, let me ask, to object to spiritual manifestations because certain conditions are required to be observed before they can be witnessed? Do these manifestations differ in this respect from anything else within the domain of science; can, for instance, an ordinary photograph be produced without certain conditions being observed? or can a telegraph message be obtained unless the necessary conditions are present? If not, why should any sensible man object to investigate the subject on such irrational and unscientific grounds?

Spiritualism, I admit, is a science that is as yet very imperfectly understood by its most advanced investigators, but it should be borne in mind that every branch of science has at one time occupied a similar position; it is, therefore the height of folly to ignore it on this account. The credentials which spiritual science has to offer are indisputable facts—facts as hard and stubborn as those which have been ascertained through the investigation of any of the 'physical sciences. The witnesses of these facts number thousands or even millions, and the character of many of these witnesses is unimpeachable; and further, as I have already stated, no hypothesis other than the simple spiritual explanation has yet been suggested that will cover all the spiritual phenomena.

“The world is waking from its phantom dreams
To know reality from that which seems.”

As my object this evening is not to demonstrate, but to indicate—not to prove the truth of the continuity of life after physical dissolution, as personal investigation can alone do this, but merely to state a few of the many reasons which I consider justify me in calling upon Materialists to investigate spiritual science—I may mention that from our reason, if unbiassed by prejudice, springs an intuitive consciousness of a continued existence; in proof of which I refer to the almost universal belief

among all peoples, civilised and savage, ancient and modern, in a life to come. Spiritual phenomena, however, bring this home to our very senses and prove that the physical body of man is merely an adumbration, or evanescent shadow of the indwelling and deathless spirit or Ego, thereby confirming the saying of old, viz., "that which is seen is temporal, but that which is unseen is enduring." The impossibility of man's intellectual desires and aspirations being satisfied in this short life of "three score years and ten," I maintain, points to continuance of life beyond the shock of death. The evidence, however, obtainable through spiritual science converts into a living reality that which otherwise would be merely hypothetical.

Unfortunately there are many, sensible enough in other matters, whose reasoning faculties in anything concerning their religious beliefs are impervious to all argument, in consequence of the popular faith requiring the degradation of reason, and others whose spiritual perceptions seem to be completely clouded by a dense materialistic film through which they are stone-blind to all things spiritual and to the inconsistency and insufficiency of their soulless theories. The former of these, whom I have termed Superstitionists, have prostituted their reason to credulity under the specious name of faith; and the latter, whom I have designated Materialists, have immolated their reasoning faculties to excessive incredulity under the erroneous idea that they have bounded all nature's laws, while the fact is, like tadpoles, they cannot see beyond the mud in which they are wallowing. Fortunately, the unverifiable beliefs of the one class, and the false theories of the other, will sooner or later have to give way to demonstrable facts. As the statement that the popular faith requires the degradation of reason may be called in question, I challenge believers therein to disprove the fact that so long as private judgment agrees with certain dogmas it is considered by them to be a sacred principle, but as soon as it differs therefrom it is held to be an invention of a mythical being called Satan.

In order to illustrate that our conscious self, the Ego, is not the physical body, as most people falsely assume, I need only point out that it is an indisputable fact that by the exercise of the will, which may be termed the executive of the mind, we can cultivate any particular faculty, and thus alter, not only the shape of the brain, but also of its covering, the skull, just as by the exercise of one of our limbs we can cause an increase in the size of the muscles of that limb. As has been truly remarked, "the brain grows to the manner of its using." This fact, I hold, is a clear proof that thought is not, as Materialists assert, a function of the brain, proving on the contrary that the brain is merely the instrument of the mind. It is in fact the indwelling mind that builds up its own scaffolding, the physical body, so that to a certain extent it is true that "man makes himself," or more properly, evolves himself. That the character of a man can be judged by the appearance of his physical body has been demonstrated over and over again by those who understand Phrenology, Physiognomy, and Physiology.

Those who have investigated Anatomy and Physiology declare that our physical bodies are completely renovated every seven or ten years, and that every part of the brain, the instrument of thought, as it has been termed, is changed many times during fifty years of life; and yet those who, like myself, have attained to that age can look back through these fifty years of unbroken continuity of consciousness and know that we are the same selves who by means of a body which we put off more than forty years ago did things which are now as much our own acts as the day they were done. Could this be the case, I ask, unless the self, the Ego, the true man is something distinct from the constantly changing physical body? Consciousness of identity being preserved by the indwelling mind, notwithstanding the repeated changes of the body, we therefore do not depend upon the outward husk for the recognition of our identity, which is not influenced by the laws that affect physical matter.

Mesmerism and Clairvoyance, as I have already stated,

have demonstrated that the mind or Ego can, under certain conditions, act independent of the physical senses, and through spiritual science it is demonstrated that this Ego survives the death of the animal body of man, its conditions only being changed. So that instead of man being but a reflective animal, as our materialistic friends assume, he is a deathless spirit clothed, when on the physical plane of existence, with an animal body suitable for his environments, and that just as a moth or butterfly requires to go through the chrysalistic stage in order to develop, so do we require to pass through the earthly stage of life for the purpose of developing our spiritual organism, and our individual consciousness.

It is mind, I maintain, that forms the individuality which remains unchanged in point of identity from the cradle to the grave. It is mind that gives the body its instinctive carriage, the frame its characteristic height and build, the voice its peculiar tone, and the brain its special faculties. It is in fact mind that is the real moving force and that co-ordinates the arrangements of matter throughout the infinite universe. As has been truly remarked, "man as the microcosm represents the macrocosm;" he is the crown of physical evolution through spirit energy, for man alone possesses moral consciousness. What are termed natural forces are essentially spiritual, for all things are formed, energised, and vitalised by spirit. It is spirit that moulds the lovely forms of the violet, the rose, and the lily, and which distils their fragrant aromas. It is spirit that is the real substance—the essential and enduring principle. That which the Materialist views as indisputably real and objective is that which is phenomenal and evanescent. Gross matter being only a mode of spiritual presentation is but the passing shadow, while spirit is the living and enduring principle.

That there is something beyond mere physical existence is also indicated by Phrenology, through the study of which we learn that we possess no faculty without its proper sphere of action, without a need for its existence, and without an actual demand that it shall be exercised.

The presence of a faculty, indeed, implies a need for its field of action ; consequently, as the eye denotes light and the ear sound, so do the moral and religious faculties in man imply something beyond mere animal life and consciousness.

These faculties, consisting of conscientiousness, veneration, hope, benevolence, spirituality, and the higher action of ideality and sublimity, have been well termed "the skylights of the soul." They are the connecting links between mind and matter, between God and man.

Spiritual wants demand supply as much as do physical wants ; and as there exist the means of satisfying the latter, we may with confidence rest assured that there exist the means of satisfying the former even if we had not, through spiritual science, the demonstration that this is the case. As below man is the animal kingdom, so above him is the spirit-world. Experience indicates that all things are progressive, we cannot, therefore, consistently assume that nature develops man but to destroy him ere his spiritual wants are satisfied ; and the almost universal belief in, and desire for, a continuance of life, lead us to conclude that such belief and desire will be fulfilled, seeing that for all other desires there are means of fulfilment. On what rational grounds can the Materialist maintain that nature has implanted this, the highest, noblest, and purest desire in the human soul but to mock it and disappoint it ? Oh no ! It is not all life,

" To fight and fly and slave,
And then (ere long) stone-dead to lie."

Colonel Ingersoll, one of the leading Agnostic advocates of the day, says he hopes there is a life beyond the grave, though he cannot declare that his hopes are well founded. Alder, another upholder of the speculative materialistic philosophy, admits that he knows not how to give consolation to the bereaved in the hour of their bitter sorrow. If these men would only condescend to investigate spiritual science, they would gain that knowledge which transforms hope into certainty, and thereby truly robs death of its sting and the grave of its victory.

We possess both animal and spiritual organs, indicative of the two stages of existence, the one a life of struggle and death, the other the real life, because it is enduring. Our spiritual organs acting through the organic nerves are ever weaving structures out of the unformed material of the blood. Through the lungs, skin, liver, bowels and kidneys, we are constantly throwing off, unconsciously, particles of which our physical bodies are composed, and are as constantly taking on other particles in their place so long as our animal and spiritual organisms are connected; when once they are severed, this ceases and dissolution of the physical body ensues; its spiritual counterpart, however, endures, being vivified by a deathless spark of the eternal and infinite Spirit, the Source of all energy, life, and intelligence, the eternal Cause of Causation, Unity as comprehending all things, and Multifiform as being in all things, far exceeding man's finite conceptions and his highest ideality, because infinite and incomprehensible. As the poet has truly written :

“ Oh, not through seemly forms or creeds,
 By man with skilful thought designed ;
 To me He comes, the primal God,
 The Sov'reign Force, the central Mind.
 The tidal pulse of Nature's heart,
 He buds and blooms in summer hours ;
 He comes in Autumn's flush and fruit,
 In Winter's crown of hoary flowers.
 He floods the morn with orient tides ;
 His golden glory noon imbars ;
 In sunset's flaming car He glides ;
 He wheels through night in pomp of stars,
 A Power to will, to plan, to guide ;
 He works throughout the world to-day,
 To animate, inspire, provide.”

In studying Nature we observe combination, selection, growth, evolution, purpose, etc.; in fact, that there is a method in all her laws, and method, I hold, implies intelligence, and intelligence implies mind, because without intelligence there could be no method. The regularity of the motion of the innumerable orbs of the great solar system, as is proved by the exactitude with which astronomers can prognosticate eclipses, is evidence of the

existence of method and annihilates the materialistic doctrine of blind chance, which implies irregularity and confusion. A believer in evolution cannot consistently say he does not believe in a directing Intelligence, for if natural selection results in the "survival of the fittest," it is self-evident that intelligence is manifested in the selection, and that intelligence must have a Source, unless the old latin adage *Ex nihilo nihil fit* is false.

Some of the leading scientific Agnostics of the day candidly admit that the derivation of consciousness from atomic vibrations is unthinkable. Vitality is not the result of organism, as Materialists assert, neither are life, consciousness, and intelligence the outcome of a fortuitous combination of atoms, nor the consequence of chemical affinity, for chemical action does not affect the particles of which the physical body is composed until vitality departs, when instead of building the body up it disintegrates it and resolves its particles into their original elements. The necessarian doctrine which would make virtue a baseless fiction is disproved by the fact that every man's will determines to a certain extent the course of his life.

If, as the Materialist asserts, consciousness, intelligence, and all other potencies of life, are but the chance or unintentional results of atomic forces, then man's moral freedom and responsibility must be pure fictions of the brain. Mr. Herbert Spencer, notwithstanding his agnostic leaning, candidly acknowledges, in the January number of the *Nineteenth Century*, that the searcher after truth, in contemplating the universe, will find that "amid the mysteries which become the more mysterious the more they are sought about, there will remain the one absolute certainty that he is ever in presence of an Infinite and Eternal Energy, from which all things proceed."

An Intelligent Source, I hold, is a logical necessity, call it Eternal Energy, Natural Force, Infinite Spirit, God, or what you please. A fact is not affected by the name given to it, just as a rose smells as sweet called by any other name.

The denial by Materialists of the existence of a Supreme Power and of man's continuity of life, is the natural outcome of the false, irrational, and debasing conceptions popularly taught and entertained regarding them. The facts made known through the discoveries of science are antagonistic to an anthropomorphic Deity, with an only-begotten son or an only-begotten daughter, but all true scientists must admit an unseen Intelligence underlying all law. Doubtless, in some instances, such as in the case of earthquakes, tornados, epidemics, etc., the laws of nature, viewed from a temporal standpoint, seem defective; but these instances are, I claim, the exception, not the rule. I hold that the general order of nature and the harmony of her laws point to the existence of a universal though unseen Intelligence, and that the finite intelligence manifested in man must, like everything else, have a source.

That there is a force manifesting intelligence underlying all phenomena every honest observer of nature must, as I have remarked, acknowledge, for in all objects of which we are cognisant certain properties and qualities are manifested which determine their modes of action, and all bodies in nature reciprocally act on each other by virtue of these properties and qualities, thereby proving an ever-present Intelligence in all things. This Intelligence being manifest in the operation of all the laws of the universe there can be no such thing as supernaturalism; and through spiritual science we learn that although spiritual laws differ from physical laws, the former are as fixed and inviolable as the latter, and that all phenomena in the spiritual realms as well as here are the result of the operation of this one ever-present though invisible Intelligence, call it nature, God, the Infinite, the Cause of the play of the forces of nature, or anything else, it matters not. I hold that every atom that exists is an infinitesimal part of the Infinite, for as the poet Pope states:

"All are parts of one stupendous whole,
Whose body Nature is and God the soul."

Theologians, by investing the Infinite with the semblance

and properties of man, make their God responsible for all the cruelties witnessed in nature, which in accordance with the eternal law of progression is ever striving for good. And in her aims at Universalism it appears that conflict and pain are the inevitable accompaniments of development. Why this is the case I cannot say, not being able to account for all the manifestations, unfoldings, and intricacies of Infinity. I believe that even a tapeworm has its use in the economy of nature, although its utility has not yet been discovered by man.

I am aware that the existence of God is undemonstrable, and that man cannot solve the problem of infinity—fashion the Infinite through words, or measure the Eternal Source of all things by figures—he can only state his conceptions of God for the consideration of others. The Atheist's assertion that matter is all, is, however, contrary to fact, for as man, the highest development of physical matter, possesses life, consciousness, and intelligence, and as all that is in him is derived from the universe there must consequently be in the universe not only matter, but life, consciousness, and intelligence. A dead universe is an absurdity, for even Materialists admit that energy and law are everywhere manifest. A common saying with Materialists is that a finite cannot co-exist with an Infinite; they might just as reasonably assert that a part cannot co-exist with the whole. And it has been urged that if intelligence and goodness indicate a source, on the same principle ignorance and evil must also indicate a source; but this is fallacious, because the former, like light which has a source, are absolute, while the latter, like darkness, which is merely the absence of light, are relative, for as soon as the sun's rays are admitted, darkness is dissipated. In like manner, knowledge dispels ignorance, and goodness vice. Materialists also assert that they see no room for God in the universe, and that there is no such thing as soul or spirit, because they cannot see it; yet they admit the existence of mind in man, although it is equally invisible. It would be quite as reasonable for a man who never saw either of his grandfathers to declare that therefore he

never had one, as it is for those who have not investigated the subject to deny the existence of spirit. As the finite mind of man is manifested through his actions, so, I maintain, is the Infinite Mind of the Universe manifested in the wonderful phenomena of nature.

“ Creation’s wondrous works and laws

Denote God’s presence there :

The Infinite, th’ Eternal Cause,

Revealing everywhere

A wondrous chain through nature runs

Which shows one grand design,

Through mind and matter, worlds and suns,

Proclaiming power divine.”

To deny or even to ignore the existence of God, merely because as finite beings we cannot comprehend the Infinite, and are only able to apprehend a part, is self-evidently absurd ; the writer of old was, therefore, in my opinion, justified in declaring those to be foolish who said there was no God.

Notwithstanding all the boasted knowledge of Materialistic scientists, not one of them has yet been able even to define what matter is. I challenge one and all of them to refute this statement. Yet they have the audacity to assert that force is but an attribute of matter ; they studiously omit, however, to inform us whence the intelligence manifest in force is derived. They admit that there is no such thing as inert matter and that it is only by the force that is in matter that we are able to recognise it, but they fail to acknowledge that without intelligence we could not be aware of these facts, and that as out of nothing cometh nothing, so this intelligence must have a source.

Materialists also say that the physical brain of man secretes thought, they might quite as reasonably assert that the telegraph wire secretes intelligence. And in their assertions that man is but a product of matter, and that the faculties of the soul are only a secretion of the brain as the urine is that of the kidneys, they might as rationally argue that reflection, remorse, sympathy, benevolence, etc., are but the results of atomic force, or molec-

ular motion. I hold that it is as impossible to evolve mind out of matter as it is for mind to create matter out of nothing, or to annihilate matter; and the very fact that the basis of Materialism is claimed to be valid on the veracity of consciousness, concedes what spiritual scientists contend for, viz., that the physical sciences are inadequate to account for all the phenomena in nature, and that there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in the Materialist's philosophy, notably the mainspring that energises and vitalises the whole.

Professor Balfour Stewart, in the July number of the *Contemporary Review*, acknowledges that the objections which present themselves to the Materialist's physical theory of the universe are numerous and forcible, while he at the same time admits that the spiritual hypothesis is wholly free from them. Referring to apparitions and the weight of evidence in their favour Professor Stewart writes: "We cannot decline to discuss them as possibilities. In any case they are easily explicable under the Spiritual hypothesis, while they can hardly be explained by any other." The value of a theory or an hypothesis, it should be borne in mind, depends entirely upon how far it accounts for the phenomenon which it is intended to explain.

While physical science has given to the world a knowledge of many of the forces, and their operations found and expressed in nature, the fact that these forces and their operations indicate an Intelligence beyond the comprehension of man, appears to be in a process of elimination from the thoughts of the majority of the scientific men of the day.

Yet they shrink from maintaining that the course of history and all that are called human affairs are due to purely molecular agency, and that we are what we are, and do what we do, as the atoms form and guide us, thereby indicating that secretly they suspect that there is something beyond the philosophy which they uphold; and were they candid enough they would acknowledge that their soulless philosophy, at times, fails to satisfy

the longings and aspirations of their higher nature. I maintain that the consciousness that the human mind is capable of conceiving ideas and thoughts transcending the power of expression, testifies to its owning existence to a Power higher and beyond itself ; and I hold that the high moral character of many Materialists gives the lie direct to their creed, for if, as they profess to believe, this life ends all, then undoubtedly the Epicurean philosophy would be the only consistent one for them to adopt.

“ 'Tis often well that people's creeds
Are contradicted by their deeds.”

This Materialism or Agnosticism, so prevalent among scientists, can only be met by a scientific demonstration of spiritual facts. Thus only can men of science see for themselves that spiritual laws, though occult, are natural laws, and can, therefore, like physical laws, be scientifically investigated. All other means have failed, and will continue to fail, because they are powerless to stem the surging tide of skepticism. The difficulty is to get these scientific Agnostics to investigate the subject. If they would only condescend to do so they would find that “there is a superstition of negation as well as of affirmation—of incredulity as well as of credulity ;” also, that grand and extensive as is the field of physical research, a vaster and more inexhaustible field in spiritual science lies before them, opening up an immense array of priceless treasures, out of which they can evolve, for the guidance of all unprejudiced minds in the present and of succeeding generations, a system of philosophy the foundation of which will rest on ground no less secure than that on which the exact sciences are based, viz., the invincible demonstration of fact and the impregnable rock of truth. As has been truly remarked, “Spiritualism is a complete induction, as it harmonises with every fact in the universe.”

Agnostics would also find that through spiritual science not only is the dual character of the universe proved, but also through it the relations of the physical and spiritual worlds are explained ; that it supplies a better idea of nature, and offers a more rational theory

of the origin and destiny of man than all else can give, for it explains the great law of spirit unfoldment and progression; and it affords a much needed antidote to the unscientific prejudices of many of our physicists as well as to the childish superstitions still cherished by theologians, who seem not to understand that faith in present living facts is totally different to faith in ancient fictions; the one being rational, while the other is irrational.

Materialism, as I have remarked, is the natural reaction against the falsities and absurdities of popular opinion regarding God and man's destiny, based on the barbarous and foolish conceptions of ignorant and superstitious times. These falsities and absurdities are, I maintain, a standing disgrace to the age we live in. The Materialist's philosophy, on the other hand, may be very good so far as it goes, but it is, as I have observed, soulless. It is like the black cook's soup, which he declared to be very good pea-soup, only he forgot to put the peas into it. A chain is said to be no stronger than its weakest link, and this is the weak point of Materialism, instead of being a very present help in time of need, it but mocks those who have trusted in it when the real strain comes. It is an indisputable fact that when death removes our friends from us, Materialism, like popular theology, is found to be wanting, for it fails to satisfy the longings of the human soul to know what has become of the mind or individuality that once vivified the lifeless body of him or her we loved so dearly. Negation can never satisfy a vital human want.

If scientific Agnostics would only devote one-tenth part of the time they now give to, say, the microscopic examination of organic cells, to the investigation of spiritual phenomena, they could not, if honest, resist the overwhelming evidence obtainable in favour of the absolute reality of the manifestations, which only the spiritual hypothesis is capable of explaining. The true scientist, the man who investigates a subject before he presumes to express an opinion thereon, and who refuses to stultify his reason in obedience to his prejudices, does not,

as does the pseudo scientist, speak in the name of science when dealing with facts beyond his ken and fatal to his views ; he more modestly confines his statements to the phenomena that have come within his reach, and to facts that have come under his observation, consequently, are within his knowledge.

The true scientific inquirer divests himself of all prejudice, and excludes no subject from his investigations, however opposed it may be to his present opinions or cherished theories. To ignore or ridicule without examination that which has been attested by numbers of unimpeachable witnesses, because it does not accord with one's views, is both illogical and one-sided. To the true scientist the conclusions of to-day are but the stepping-stones on which to rise to higher, nobler, and more correct views on the morrow. Those scientists who stubbornly persist in ignoring spiritual phenomena should bear in mind that the Greek sages were considered wise until succeeding generations found out they were fools in regard to many things which they thought they understood. As the Astronomer, Flammarion, declares : "The sciences of observation admit nothing *a priori* ; but observed facts ought to be received into the domain—ever enlarging—of human knowledges, even although the present state of these knowledges renders us unable to give an explanation of them." To the truly scientific inquirer a single fact established by disinterested evidence is more effective than all the authority or logic in the world.

Although the honourable recognition which those who, in the face of popular opinion to the contrary, declare in favour of spiritual science merit, is denied them now, it will certainly be accorded them by the verdict of a posterity from whom the prejudices that now blind shall have passed away into the dim distance of the past. This statement, as well as many others that I have made, will, doubtless, not meet with the approval of those of you whom I term conservative scientists, but as a writer of old declared : "To me it is a very small thing that I am judged of you or of man's judgment," so long as my

object is accomplished, which is to call attention to the untenability of the Materialistic theory, and expose the intolerance and bigotry still shown by so many men of science to that which, sooner or later, will dispel every form of falsehood, however plausible and fashionable it may be, and which will shed more light on the mysteries of nature than has yet been done by all the discoveries of the past.

As before the microscope was invented mankind were surrounded by a world undreamt of, so to-day are most men, through prejudice, surrounded by a world they know nothing about, but into which, sooner or later, they will all have to enter. Before many years have passed, such manifestations will take place in public that scientists and others will no longer be able to ignore the truth and reality of spiritual phenomena and spiritual existence.

“ Oh no ; it is no flattering lure,
 No fancy weak or fond,
 When hope would bid us rest secure
 In better life beyond.”

To class spiritual science with ancient superstitions, as is very frequently done, is the height of folly, for while the latter were inaugurated in ignorant and credulous times, when astrology occupied the place of astronomy, alchemy of chemistry, and fiction of facts, the former has had to force its way against an opposing tide of skepticism in an age of practical observation and inductive reasoning, when we have made steam our servant-of-all-work, light our portrait-painter, and electricity our lamplighter and postman. That spiritual phenomena occur is a matter of fact and not a question for argument, as any one can satisfy himself of their reality who will take the trouble to investigate. The evidence that spiritual manifestations take place is, therefore, of the most conclusive character, resting as it does on ocular and tangible demonstration and actual personal experience, and not simply upon the opinions of others, as do many of the accepted theories of physical science. The diverse method of these manifestations, as attested by numerous witnesses in different parts of the

globe, between whom there could not possibly be collusion, is in itself an irrefutable argument in favour of their occurrence.

And the evasion of inquiry into spiritual realities is, I hold, evidence of moral cowardice on the part of non-investigators. A man devoid of spiritual aspirations, however highly he may have cultivated his intellectual faculties, is only one remove from the non-reflective animals. To those who clamour for the production of spiritual manifestations to order, I may remark they are not to be commanded at will, and are subject to very subtle conditions, which are still very imperfectly understood.

Modern Spiritualism affords phenomenal proof of the presence and activity of disembodied human minds ; it appeals to reason, and is founded on the facts of direct demonstration ; it, therefore, has a scientific basis, and it supplies scientific evidence of a life after death. It demonstrates that matter is but a mode of expression by spirit ; that spirit is the energising, vivifying, and intelligent principle in the physical and spiritual realms of the universe ; that magnetism is the connecting link between the two ; that individuality, memory, and love are undying ; that ignorance and selfishness are hell, and true wisdom heaven ; that what is called death is but a change of condition from a lower to a higher stage of existence ; that Nature embraces not only things physical, but also things spiritual ; and that the physical sciences constitute but the lower half of science. It proves that continuity of life is not a supernatural but a natural fact that can be scientifically demonstrated when the necessary conditions are complied with ; and that intercommunion between those in spiritual and those in the physical states of existence is not only probable but possible, for it actually takes place, so that the spiritual world is a bourne from whence the traveller *can* return, if he so chooses, and can demonstrate his presence if the opportunity is afforded him and he possesses the knowledge requisite to do so. I hold that when the conditions for spiritual manifestations

are better understood, and the prevailing prejudice has passed away, spirit communion will as certainly be demonstrated to all as is telegraphic communication between distant countries now, which our ancestors would have thought an utter impossibility, much in the same way as non-investigators still think regarding spirit intercourse. I further hold that notwithstanding the immense amount of nonsense, error, imposture, and fraud that have been mixed up with the Modern Spiritualistic movement, there still remains a large residuum of indisputable fact and an amount of testimony regarding the phenomena sufficiently great to induce every free-minded student of nature to lay aside his prejudices and preconceived theories, and apply himself fearlessly, patiently, and intelligently to an investigation of this the higher branch of science, which exalts, uplifts, and strengthens the divinest affections of humanity.

“ One ray, at last, of piercing light,
Has pierced the darkness of our mental night.”

Those who have investigated Spiritualism can truthfully say *we know*, as a result of personal observation and of practical demonstration, that man survives the shock of death ; that he lives an intelligent entity beyond the grave ; that his spiritual organism is perfectly adapted to his new condition ; that no matter what his state may be—good, bad, or indifferent—every one is moving forward, onward, and upward, progress being the unalienable heritage of all, and that under certain conditions he can and does return, and when the opportunity is afforded him he holds communion with those who are in affinity with him. Physical matter is thereby proved to be not essential to life, consciousness, and intelligence, which are developments from antecedent life, consciousness, and intelligence, just as man’s physical organism is a development from antecedent matter. And I hold that as man’s physical body indicates the material source from which it is derived, so does man’s intelligence indicate the intelligent Source from which it emanates ; and further, that as all that man possesses is derived from the universe, it is impossible to account for the finite

existence in man of life, consciousness, and intelligence, without the existence of an infinite Source of these in nature from which to be derived ; and I challenge the world to disprove this.

I shall conclude with a few lines of a poem entitled "Matter and Spirit," received inspirationally by Mrs. E. L. Watson :—

"The heart of Nature is not cold,
 But throbs with love's electric fire
 That shapes the soft material mould
 To meet the spirit's swift desire.

 She spreads her shadow-wings at night,
 And men with awe the act behold ;
 When lo ! her countless spheres of light
 Sift down their beams of starry gold.

 She piles the heavens high with storm ;
 We question her with kite and key,
 And lightning-couriers straightway swarm
 To bear our thoughts o'er land and sea.

 What we call matter is not free,
 'Tis subject to the law of mind—
 The garment of infinity,
 Or God and Nature e'er combined.

 And every need of human life
 Is but the will of God expressed ;
 And all the realms of space are rife
 With thoughts of God in matter dressed."

To those who desire to investigate Spiritual Science, I can confidently recommend the perusal, in the first place of the following books on the subject, which are only a few out of hundreds of similar works I could name :—

Report on Spiritualism of the London Dialectical Society.

“Researches in Spiritualism,” by Wm. Crookes, member of the Council of the Royal Society of England.

“Miracles and Modern Spiritualism,” by Alfred Russell Wallace, F.R.G.S.

“Transcendental Physics,” by Professor Friedrich Zollner, of Leipzig University.

“Animal Magnetism,” by Professor William Gregory, of Edinburgh University, F.R.S., E.

“Reichenbach’s Researches.”

“Feichner’s Life after Death.”

“A Scientific Basis of Belief in a Future Life,” by Alfred Page Hopps. Etc., etc.



NOTE.—I purposely omitted, in the foregoing paper, entering into detail in regard to the phenomena witnessed by me during my investigations in the higher branch of science, because, as observed therein, I was aware that my statements would be discredited, my ability to use my senses denied, and my intellectual integrity attacked by the opponents of Spiritualism, and because I felt that to recount even a thousandth part of my experiences would have increased the paper (already quite long enough), to such an extent that I would thereby have been imposing too much on the patience of my auditors.

I may here, however, briefly mention that when no medium, paid or unpaid, was present, I have, in my normal state and in the light of day, seen friends who have passed through the change called death as well as portions of the spirit-world which I can describe, and which was quite beyond the power of my imagination and different to what I should have fancied it was like.

I have, at private circles, frequently seen, felt, and heard spirits temporally materialised—the medium at the same time being visible and bearing no resemblance thereto either in features, expression, or size. These materialised forms were likewise visible to the others present. On one occasion a spirit stood out between the medium and the sitters, gave his name, and recounted some of both his earthly and his spiritual experiences in a voice bearing no resemblance to that of the medium or any one present in the flesh. I have, in broad daylight, under test-conditions, seen a hand materialised only so far as the wrist and smaller than that of any one present, move in the air without any visible support; have grasped it, felt it soft and warm, and as I held it in my hand it dematerialised. It was also distinctly seen by two of the members of my family who were present. I have seen a slate-pencil influenced to write legibly by an invisible agency. I have witnessed tables and chairs moved and levitated without contact, and I have held a conversation with an invisible intelligence, through raps on a table in my own house, when no one was present in the flesh except myself.

I may further state that the hands of two of my children were influenced to write distinctly before they knew their alphabet; and three of the members of my family have written in languages and on subjects with which they were totally unacquainted. Such experiences as the few I have enumerated, although almost incredible to those who have not investigated Spiritualism, are not singular on my part, for others in different portions of the globe have recorded having had similar experiences.

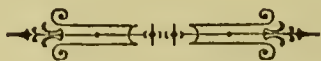
Believing that one experience by an opponent will have more weight in the eyes of an Agnostic than a

thousand related by avowed Spiritualists, I shall here insert the admissions of an inveterate opponent to Modern Spiritualism, namely, W. Clarke, M.D. In a pamphlet written by that gentleman, and entitled "Spiritualism Unveiled," at page 4, Dr. Clarke states :—

"It is true that some of the phenomena may be explicable on the theories of Latent Thought, Reflex Action of the Brain, Unconscious Crebration, Psychic Force, etc.; and it is undeniably certain that there is a vast amount of jugglery and imposture connected with the movement. *But none of these theories are sufficient to cover the whole of the facts; and it would be absurd to suppose a combination of them all.*" [The italics are mine.] "Many years' experience with mediums and circles has convinced me that there is something more than trickery in the movement; and the stern logic of facts, resulting from careful observation, rigid scrutiny, and mature reflection, have brought us to the inevitable conclusion that the majority of the phenomena, etc., are from a source which is intelligent, extra-human, and super-mundane. Numerous cases illustrating this deduction might be mentioned, but we will narrate only one, merely adding that even that one might be transcended by others of which we have preserved a careful record. Our youngest child, a little girl, now passed on to a brighter world, at the age of six years, developed into a 'medium.' One day, whilst alone with her in a room, she playing on the floor and ourself writing, we were surprised to see her get up, and seizing paper and pencil, write rapidly for several minutes. On reading what was written, we perceived it to be an essay, extending over a page of foolscap paper, on Astronomy, and subscribed with the name of a grandfather who had died some fourteen years previously. Now, observe, prior to that time the child had never done anything in writing, for she was backward in her education, and knew nothing beyond a few monosyllabic words, such as 'of,' 'cat,' etc., etc.; of Astronomy, of course, she was totally ignorant; the communication contained information on that science which (with regret and shame we say it) was new to us ;

the composition was faultless in every respect—syntax, punctuation, and all ; and the name at the conclusion of the essay was, we have every reason to think, quite unknown to the child, and being a difficult as well as an uncommon one, viz., Sylvester, even had she heard it before, she could not have recollected the orthography ; and, moreover, the putative author had not occupied our thoughts for many years.”

Such incontrovertible proof as the foregoing presents of the truth of spirit communion was quite thrown away on Dr. Clarke, because through superstitious prejudice he irrationally came to the conclusion that the controlling spirit who wrote through the hand of his innocent little child was not her grand father, put that mythical being called Satan. This simple admission by an opponent to Modern Spiritualism I hold to be a complete refutation of the Materialistic theory that matter is all. No fact in history, I maintain, is better authenticated than that certain individuals who previously dwelt on earth, and who passed through the change called death, have appeared, been recognised, and have communicated with those on earth. As has been admitted by the celebrated Dr. Johnson : “ If anything in the world has been tested by facts—if anything has been tested by credible witnesses—the connection and union which blend the spiritual and material worlds have been so tested.”



[ADDENDA.]

SPIRITUALISM: ITS FACTS AND PHILOSOPHY.

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED BY MR. W. EGLINTON AT
ST. JAMES'S HALL, LONDON, MAY 27TH, 1884,
AS REPORTED IN "LIGHT."

Through the kindness and liberality of Mr. W. Pritchard Morgan, I have been enabled to call my friends together to witness such experiments in psychography as the conditions here this evening may permit me to illustrate. I am the more desirous of making public example of Mr. Morgan's generosity, in that the course he is pursuing is one that may well be followed by others, and in other instances, as a most effectual means of bringing the facts of spirit-phenomena before the public in a popular, and, I venture to hope, conclusive manner. I can but feel deeply my own incompetency in the presence of this large audience, among whom it gives me the greatest pleasure to recognise many ladies and gentlemen possessed of talent far greater than my own; but as I, perhaps, have had some practical experience in these phenomena, which enables me to speak positively of their character and importance, as I know them to be of the greatest benefit to mankind when rightly understood, I am sure you will all do me the honor to listen attentively to all I may bring forward in support of Spiritualism. The importance of these psychic facts—or, as they may be correctly termed, spiritual manifestations—can scarcely be over-estimated, even by the enthusiast, as they afford us the only key which can unlock the portals of immortal life to that ever-widening class of thinkers who, failing to accept the traditional

beliefs of the world, declare themselves agnostic with regard to all things spiritual. This is an age of scientific research—of cool, calm, deliberate investigation of the facts of nature. No mere legends of historical facts will satisfy your scientists of the reality of a future life, or even of the existence of a spirit in man; as the ancient records inform us, signs and wonders were often necessary to convince a sceptical public. As Christians everywhere admit that miracles transpired when they were needed, so at this hour, their being again demanded by the necessities of the age causes their re-production. But when I use the word “miracle,” I wish you distinctly to understand me not to teach that spiritual manifestations owe their origin to a suspension of any natural law. They are, however, the result of the operations of law, the existence of which is unknown to the majority even of our most eminent physicists. I know it is the boast of Science that the laws of Nature are immutable, and that it is our privilege and duty neither to accept nor reject anything until we have proved it to be either a truth or an error. I can both understand and sympathise with simple neutrality, scepticism, or Agnosticism, up to a certain point. Much that takes place in the material world every moment is necessarily an insoluble mystery to us in our present stage of development. I can, therefore, pronounce many things unknown to me, but I should not like to venture the assertion that anything is absolutely impossible or unknowable. The laws of Nature are so much vaster and far-reaching than our knowledge of them, that we safely agree at one and the same time with the physicist who refers everything to natural law; and with the religionist who acknowledges a higher law or force in Nature than that which is revealed in simple every-day phenomena. While admiring the learning, ability, and industry of our great men—Huxley, Spencer, Tyndall, and others too numerous to mention—it appears to me that the positively puerile and discourteous remarks made by these gentlemen when asked to give their opinion on Spiritualism prove them to be, at present, utterly disqualified from giving a candid and valuable opinion upon the subject. To confess one’s disin-

clination to investigate a subject, is to confess to a certain extent a feeling of prejudice against what may be, for all we know to the contrary, a mighty truth in Nature. Those scientific lights who spurn the claims of Spiritualism entirely, without having investigated it, appear in the eyes of all important judges in a very unfavorable light, when their conduct stands in juxtaposition to the action taken by such men as Crookes, Wallace, Lord Lindsay, Varley, and others in the matter. No one can accuse these men of illiteracy or soft-headedness; and yet among the advocates of Spiritualism it is almost impossible to find stouter champions of the cause than the same able, industrious, and successful experimentalists. You have probably (many of you at least) read "Transcendental Physics," by the celebrated German physicist, Zöllner. This truly great and noble man investigated psychography in broad daylight, and under conditions that made the experiments absolute, with the well-known American medium, Henry Slade, at whose table I am to conduct experiments this evening. This table, which is now beside me on the platform, has been denounced by Mr. Maskelyne, of Egyptian Hall notoriety (I hope he will thank me for this advertisement) as a trick-table, by means of which Slade imposed on a credulous public. This table, in the full consciousness of its own innocence, invites you to critically and closely examine it before the experiments; so if Maskelyne was able in a police-court to discover the means whereby Slade performed his tricks, without having been present at one of his séances and witnessing the real character of the phenomena produced, you will have a much better opportunity of seeing how far this celebrated table is capable of assisting me in producing whatever results may be obtained on this occasion. To those who know how hostile unreasoning sceptics are to all psychic phenomena, it may not be uninteresting to call your attention to a letter which appeared in the *Indian Daily News* during the time of my residence in Calcutta, in which the writer charges me with having been "imperfectly educated" for my profession, and backed Mr. Kellar, the celebrated conjurer, then on a visit to India, to do "just the same mani-

festation in the clearest daylight and with double the number of sitters. . . . I will tell Mr. Eglinton and his friends what to do with the conjurers," said the writer, "*convert one*, and the world is at your feet. A believing member of the profession who has been *bonâ fide* convinced of the truth of Spiritualism, and of the genuineness of its manifestations, will make the new St. Paul of the dispensation. Depend upon it, rows of eminent chemists, and distinguished naturalists on the advanced enquirer's bench, will be of less value in the providential scheme than one *prestidigitateur* of ordinary moral character." Kellar, at that time, was "exposing" Spiritualism in Calcutta. I was held up to ridicule and much annoyed by articles which were constantly appearing in the daily papers, taunting me with my inability to produce a single manifestation the conjurers could not both rival and surpass. I do not think it expedient to draw conjurers into the ranks at all. The pressure brought to bear upon me was evidently with a view to gratuitously advertise these same conjurers; but the annoyance to which I was subjected at length became so great that I resolved, like most Englishmen who care to hit straight from the shoulder, either to convince one of these persons that there were manifestations he, as a conjurer, could not duplicate, or fall myself in the attempt to substantiate the claims of Spiritualism. The result is, perhaps, familiar to you all, but to refresh your memories with a recital of his own words, and also for the benefit of some who may not have read them or heard them quoted, I must tax your patience with another excerpt from the same paper—the *Indian Daily News*—in which Mr. Kellar expresses himself in the following words: "In conclusion, let me state that, after a most stringent trial and strict scrutiny of these most wonderful experiences, I can arrive at no other conclusion than that there was no trace of trickery in any form, nor was there in the room any mechanism or machinery by which could be produced the phenomena which had taken place."

Strong evidence this. To the credit of this gentleman, be it said, that after publicly making the above statement, he gave up his performances which he had previously called

“exposures of Spiritualism,” and devoted himself exclusively, during all his entertainments, to legitimate conjuring. And in this manner I proved that, whatever my mental development might have been from an educational point of view, I fully justified the claim I made then, that I was not so educationally incompetent, from the conjurer’s point of view, of entering the lists and defeating them with honors upon their own ground. It would be an insult to such an audience as the present, numbering as it does many advanced and earnest Spiritualists, were I to take up more of your time in the narration of similar instances; though I shall be happy at any time, when occasion demands, to furnish my auditors with multiplied statements of a similar character from persons of high standing and recognised ability in almost every walk of life. I contend that it is simply abominable that such men as Maskelyne should be permitted to make accusations against innocent and honorable men, such as Slade, without receiving the just reprobation of a truth-seeking and truth-loving public. Slade was a martyr to the tyranny and injustice of a few unscrupulous persons, who so influenced the popular mind against the exponent of an unpopular truth that he was made to suffer acutely both in feelings and position, when his only crime was his steadfast refusal to deny the spiritual origin of the manifestations produced in his presence, which he fully knew could be correctly traced to no other than a spiritual source. If I am spared to go on with my work, and the power remains with me, I pledge my word that the injustice done Dr. Slade shall be fully wiped out and repented by his prosecutors—should I not rather say persecutors? But some may ask, granting the reality of the alleged phenomena and their inexplicability on the basis of ordinary materialistic supposition, do they, or can they positively be said to prove the reality of dis-embodied human intelligences and their power to communicate with man? Of course the primal inquiry must ever be—is a phenomenon genuine? If the answer can be unfalteringly given in the affirmative, we have at least some fresh material to work upon in our study of the laws of Nature

and the potencies of matter. Even should Zöllner's hypothesis of a fourth dimension in space be the correct solution of the problem, the discovery of a hitherto unknown dimension must be a great acquisition to the true man of science; even should the phenomena prove the existence and interposition of elementary spirits, or demonstrate some subtle potencies of embodied human will in its action over matter and grades of spiritual being, theosophically designated sub-human, such discoveries as these cannot be unimportant; but if our Theosophical brethren are so bewilderingly uncertain as to the source whence the controlling power in the production of these phenomena emanates, as they are with reference to the whereabouts of the "Himalayan Brothers," and the original source of communications received from them, taking the aphorism "ideas rule the world" as an example, I am afraid we shall be disappointed if we look for any much greater light on the subject from that quarter than we have been receiving during the past thirty-six years through the agency of competent, sincere, and successful students of the phenomena called spiritual in all parts of the civilised world. The universality of the phenomena, the enormous amount of concurrent testimony we can gather up from so great a variety of sources, the spontaneous occurrence of many manifestations in private families most unexpectedly, and, above all, the intrinsic nature of the communications received, renders the task of accounting for Spiritualism without spirits a very difficult and, I venture to affirm, an ultimately impossible one. I contend that these facts, when they occur in the presence of certain well-developed mediums, can be subjected to an analysis similar to that applied to scientific facts in general. You are not asked to accept my dictum as to their reality or truthfulness, or that of any other person, no matter how illustrious he may be. These facts are taking place in your midst to-day, and challenge your investigation, which you certainly are in duty bound to afford them, so that, if they be genuine, the world may benefit from what they prove; or, if they be false, the pretentious claims of those who indorse them should be overthrown once for all. Certainly, so far, the

puerility of the exposers has far exceeded that of any of the phenomena. We read columns upon columns of blind assertion and bigoted abuse ; we are treated to bursts of eloquence on the part of those who hope to move the emotions of their hearers by denouncing in unmeasured terms all who differ from them ; and we witness a vast amount of supercilious indifference on the part of persons who certainly ought to be able to grapple with the phenomena to some extent, and to explain in a rational manner the means whereby so many disinterested and scholarly persons have been induced to throw in their lot with the staunchest defenders of the spiritual philosophy—for these facts have a philosophy, and, moreover, a philosophy which commends itself favorably to the humblest artisan and the most eminent man of letters alike, provided he be not utterly immured in Materialism, or so wedded to ancient idols that he is unwilling to accept any light God may shed upon the world in these latter days. Spiritualism teaches the universality and unbroken continuity of Divine revelation ; it denies the inspiration vouchsafed to no ancient people ; it takes from you no truths, warnings, consolations, or encouragements you may have won from the law of Moses, the Gospel of Christ, or the ethical teachings of the far-famed seers of Egypt, Greece, Hindustan, or Persia. It comes to reconcile Religion with Science ; nay, rather to demonstrate that, except to human understanding, they need no reconciliation. The facts of material science deal with the outer structure of the Universe, leaving the soul-realm all unexplored. Spiritualism but caps the facts of outer nature with revelations from the spheres of spirit, as the sunlight crowns the Alps and glorifies the snows at their summits with light derived from other and loftier worlds. Spiritualism has this mission to the world, in that it takes from you no fact whatsoever ; it falsifies no conception or hope of life, here or hereafter, calculated to uplift you ; it answers to your cry for knowledge when the voice of material science knows not how to answer to your petition for some definite light on the stupendous topic of human immortality. As an added testimony to the immutability of the laws of Nature, as an added revelation con-

cerning the realities of existence, the fact of spirit communion asks only to be admitted as a practical demonstration of what, in every age, has been the supreme hope of mankind, viz., human immortality.

From what I have already said, you must all of you have gathered that my position is that of a resolute and uncompromising Spiritualist. I am fully satisfied that the spiritual manifestations of the present day do prove the existence of man beyond the grave as a conscious spiritual entity—Materialism and Occultism notwithstanding; but as I deem it but just and fair that everyone who is interested in the subject should be desirous of examining the evidence in favor of a conclusion such as that I have arrived at, I have thought it will be best to devote the few minutes yet remaining to a recapitulation of some of the arguments in favor of the Spiritualistic theory, which are, to my mind, conclusive as regards the source whence the intelligence directing the phenomena really emanates. It is a mere truism to assert that there can be no effect without a cause, and no effect without an adequate cause. A cause may be greater, but it can never be less, than the effect produced from it. Following a line of logical deduction from this premise as a starting point, we at once find ourselves admitting the Spiritualistic hypothesis as the only tenable one in a very large number of instances. It is not my purpose to deny the existence of gnomes, sylphs, elves, pixies, spooks, astral bodies, fragmentary souls not yet human, and a host of other elementary creatures referred to by the Theosophists as producers of the phenomena. I am even prepared to go far enough to admit that there is much logic and good common sense in many of the arguments brought forward by those who refer us to the transcendent powers of human will, even while the spirit is embodied on earth, and inform us of a Madame Blavatsky and other wonderful persons who, as initiates, or adepts, can, by sovereign power of supreme will, control not only material substances, so that physical phenomena can be produced in their presence closely akin to spiritual manifestations evidencing the power of disembodied human intelligences, but also that elementary spirits may be ren-

dered subject to human sovereignty, and be made use of by adepts in the execution of their commands and fulfilment of their wishes. I may even go so far as to say that it is extremely probable that human intelligence of a lower grade than the operating mind may be in subjection to men and women now on earth, who, whether banded together in occult fraternities for the special study and practice of magic, or working individually, apart from all associative effort, are constantly the controlling powers, while the spirits who respond are negative or subject to them. But these admissions, instead of strengthening, actually weaken the position of those who wish to cut the ground from under Spiritualism, and land us in the dreary wastes of a system which gives us wraiths, apparitions, and shells in place of the spirit friends whom we have learned to love and trust as our own earthly friends, translated to a higher sphere, where, with renewed energies and increased powers of soul and intellect, they are far more capable than when on earth of seeing into our futures and giving us practical counsel to aid us in the affairs of life—a life through which they have all passed, and the experiences of which have made them what they are. Those who have followed closely the drifts of these statements must have observed that the central affirmation in the spiritual philosophy is that the higher always controls the lower will, and that in order for anyone to be brought under spiritual or mental influence it is essential that the subjugating will should be superior to the will which it subjugates. From this it seems clear to my mind that in all manifestations where intelligence is displayed superior to the knowledge of the sitters, and where phenomena take place superior to any which we can of ourselves produce, the mind at work in its production must necessarily be beyond our own, certainly not inferior to it. Take psychography as an example. The writing produced between closed slates is something we cannot imitate; the nature of what is communicated often proves the writer to be aware of facts with which we are unacquainted; predictions are not infrequently fulfilled, proving the prophet to have an insight into affairs and events we altogether lack; and when, in addition to all I have

already brought forward, it is remembered that very often phenomena are completely beyond the control of sitters or psychics alike, we must behold in the phenomena an intrinsic evidence of no mean order, disproving the assertions of the professor of legerdemain on the one hand, who, at the Egyptian Hall, advertises an "exposure of Spiritualism" without ever producing anything under the same conditions as those under which psychics obtain results; and also the vague and unsatisfactory conclusions arrived at by those who wish us to regard all physical phenomena as the work of elementaries, and all the intellectual phases of Spiritualism as a mere stimulation of the mind under pressure of excitement or hysteria. Spiritualism will have fallen very far short of fulfilling its mission in the world if it only raised queries it cannot answer, and sets our minds afloat, rudderless and anchorless, on untried waters, with no definite expectation of ever meeting our friends on the "other side," though we have so frequently called for them and imagined they responded to our cry. I take my stand upon the old rock of conscious personal immortality. I may be a Spiritualist of the old-fashioned rather than the new-fangled type; but while I am at any moment ready to yield my convictions to any higher and more satisfactory views of truth which may be presented to me, I cannot content myself with an exchange which forces me to accept less than that which I exchange for it. When such men as William Howitt, S. C. Hall, Judge Edmonds, Professor Mapes, Professor Hare, "M. A. (Oxon)," Mr. Kiddle, and hosts of other celebrities, some of them English and some transatlantic, not to recall honored names already mentioned with respectful gratitude in this paper, and hosts of intellectual and moral exemplars in all parts of the world, have proved to their perfect satisfaction the operation of human spirits disembodied in the production of the phenomena, I cannot undertake to deny the existence of such proof, even though at times I have found it lacking in particular instances. I do not claim that every alleged or real spiritual manifestation is of so triumphant and conclusive a character as to materially aid in establishing the truth of human immortality; but if some of the

phenomena have sufficient internal evidence to justify us in the broad and general statement that Spiritualism does afford phenomenal proof of the presence and activity of disembodied human minds, must we not be as willing to allow the truth of what the most convincing and powerful as well as of what the inferior and less conclusive manifestations definitely reveal? In the study of every branch of science the very best and most wonderful experiments and disclosures are accepted with all they prove, as well as the lesser, which necessarily prove less. Every fact is of value; every iota of truth is serviceable. All we can learn of the power of mind over matter is sure to be of use to us, if we will but apply our information; but towering far above all the rudimentary phases of the subject stands the stupendous fact of human immortality, not proved to the satisfaction of the modern Agnostic by any amount of rhetorical argument or learned reference to sacred history, but often satisfactorily demonstrated through the medial instrumentality of some illiterate child; sometimes demonstrated by the simple action of mind over the simplest material objects; but wherever and whenever demonstrated, a life-power, a principle of action, an incentive to virtue, a deterrent from vice, calculated to influence for good not only the future but also, most intensely, the present life of man. As I have endeavoured to introduce the philosophy of Spiritualism to you this evening, it presents itself for your consideration and examination solely. It is no system of doctrine which any should feel bound to accept, unless he proves it for himself to be a verity; and in that the veriest freethinker can hardly feel himself at liberty to reject the known truth.

In closing, let me remind you all that we are not morally at liberty to believe just what we like and reject whatever displeases our sense of propriety or offends our personal prejudice. We must hold ourselves ready to believe whatever we find to be true, *because we know it is true*, and to reject whatever we discover to be untrue, for no other reason than because it is untrue. The true philosopher, the real scientist, the sincere religionist, may all unite here on common ground. The facts of Spiritualism

are hourly claiming your attention. They are in the world, and evidently here to stay, for they have shown pretty plainly during the past few years that no amount of persecution, neglect, or vituperation will compel them to cease. Crush them here, and they spring up there with redoubled energy. Imprison this medium, and others develop equally wonderful—even in the families of those who have taken most active part in crushing out what they have been pleased to style either a gigantic fraud or a soul-destroying heresy. As the advocate of a truth which invites the most careful examination, and is capable of withstanding any amount of honest testing, I leave you to your own researches, and trust the result of your investigation may be, in all respects, profitable to every one of you.

